

REMARKS

The claims have been amended by rewriting claim 1, canceling claims 5, 16 and 17, and adding no new claims. Claims 1-4 and 6-15 remain in the application.

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph:

The applicants believe that the rejection of claim 1 for indefiniteness is overcome by the changes made to claim 1 by this amendment. The rejection of claims 16 and 17 is rendered moot by their cancellation.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 1-4 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Egawa (USP 4547681) in view of Geens et al. (US 2003/0085397).

The Examiner stated that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Claim 1 has been changed to include the description of claim 5. The applicants therefore believe that Claim 1 as changed by this amendment is patentable, and that claims 2-4 and 5-15 are patentable, inasmuch as they ultimately depend on claim 1.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 5-12 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all other limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

See the above discussion for Claim Rejections.

Applicant notes that any amendments or claim cancellations made herein and not substantively discussed above are made solely for the purposes of more clearly and particularly describing and claiming the invention, and not for purposes of overcoming art. The Examiner should infer no (i) adoption of a position with respect to patentability, (ii) change in the Applicant's position with respect to any claim or subject matter of the invention, or (iii) acquiescence in any way to any position taken by the Examiner, based on such amendments or

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cancellations not substantively discussed. Furthermore, any remarks made herein with respect to a given claim or amendment are intended only in the context of that specific claim or amendment, and should not be applied to other claims, amendments, or aspects of Applicant's invention.

Applicant specifically reserves the right to prosecute claims of differing and broader scope than those presented herein, in a continuation application.

Accordingly, this application is believed to be in proper form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees associated herewith, including extension of time fees, to 502117.

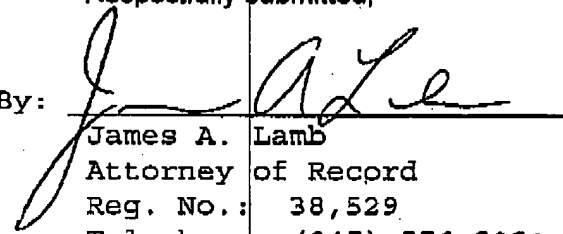
SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Motorola, Inc.
Law Department

Customer Number: 22917

Respectfully submitted,

By:



James A. Lamb
Attorney of Record
Reg. No.: 38,529
Telephone: (847) 576-5054
Fax No.: (847) 576-3750
Email: jim.lamb@motorola.com

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